

## HONORING BONI FINE

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 25, 2011*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I stand before you today to commend Boni Fine for her service to the community. Boni will be recognized for her outstanding commitment to the residents of the First Congressional District by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Northwest Indiana, at its annual Circle of Friends Event, held on October 19, 2011.

Throughout her accomplished career, Boni has held several prestigious positions, allowing her to demonstrate the skills and business acumen developed as she earned her Master of Business Administration degree from Pepperdine University. Her professional experience includes Director of Personnel for the Daily Telegraph in London; President and Publisher of the Post-Tribune in Merrillville, Indiana; and Vice President of Strategic Development/Advertising for the Sun-Times News Group in Chicago, Illinois. Moreover, her bachelor degree in social work from Syracuse University and her work as a child welfare case-worker established the foundation upon which Boni built her tireless enthusiasm for improving the quality of life for our area's youth.

Boni's resume highlights many of the organizations in which she participates and children in Northwest Indiana are most fortunate to have benefitted from her championing their cause. Not only has she previously chaired the Juvenile Diabetes Association's Walk to Cure, she was a founding member of the Children's Literacy Academy at Indiana University Northwest. Further, she has served on the Executive Board of the Boys and Girls Club of Northwest Indiana. Most recently, Boni served as the Interim Executive Director for the YWCA of Northwest Indiana, and it is for her work with this organization that she is being honored.

The YWCA of Northwest Indiana traces its roots to a branch office that had been located at 30 East 6th Avenue in Gary. Founded in 1921 with a strong commitment to serve, the organization has become a well-established institution serving the community for ninety years. Currently, the YWCA of Northwest Indiana is governed by an all-female Board of Directors committed to offering programs to young women that foster their talents and serving as professional role models whom these young women may emulate. Under Boni's leadership, this local YWCA has provided programs such as the Yes We Can, a youth program to promote academic achievement among at-risk children. Additionally, the YWCA of Northwest Indiana offers a mentoring program for teen girls in Gary in which students are paired with professional women in order to empower them and set them upon a path of success. Although this is only a brief overview of the extraordinary efforts undertaken by all individuals involved in the day-to-day operations of the YWCA of Northwest Indiana, it is important to note that they illustrate Boni's genuine devotion to its vision: to transform lives by mobilizing our diverse community to provide vibrant opportunities and experiences that strive to diminish racial and gender disparities in health, education, and wealth at-

tainment, while preparing future generations to sustain these endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Boni Fine for her exceptional community service. I know that Boni will continue to touch the lives of numerous people, and for her selfless, lifelong service, she is to be commended.

## HONORING JEFF DAVIS H.S. ON ITS 85TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 25, 2011*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jeff Davis High School in Houston, Texas, for their 85 years of excellence and dedication to improving the education of young adults.

As a Jeff Davis High School graduate I am proud to say that since 1925, Jeff Davis has established a legacy of success in academics as well as in extracurricular programs by providing students with opportunities to ensure that they are equipped with the tools that are necessary to excel. Due to the hard work of the school's faculty and staff, Jefferson Davis has been able to significantly decrease its dropout rate and increase its programs to prepare students for college. In 2009 Jefferson Davis increased its number of students enrolled in dual credit courses in Houston area colleges by 450 percent. Since 1993 the school has sent approximately 100 juniors to participate in the Cornell Summer Program, where students are able to spend a summer at Cornell University to earn college credit while still in high school.

In just the last school year, Jeff Davis was recognized for the dedication to decreasing dropout rates and increasing the number of college-bound students. Jeff Davis has been nominated as a candidate to be featured on the U.S. Department of Education "Doing What Works" website based on its success with dropout prevention. One hundred fifty-two students were able to successfully earn college credit through dual enrollment at the University of Houston Downtown and Houston Community College and over 50 individuals were awarded in numerous UIL competitions in areas such as math, writing, and accounting. In 2009–2010, the graduation rate increased to 80 percent and there was an amazing 250 percent increase in student advanced placement passing scores. In 2008–2009, the school became TEA recognized for the first time in Davis history and received the Gold Performance Acknowledgement for comparable improvement in mathematics. In recognition of this outstanding work, Jeff Davis was recognized as one of the top ten most improved high schools in Harris County and its surrounding counties by Children At Risk.

In 1993, Project GRAD & Gear Up programs were founded by former Tenneco CEO James Ketelsen at Jeff Davis. This program provides scholarships to students as an incentive to complete high school and continue their education after graduation. Last year the program awarded 2.8 million dollars in scholarships to over 700 graduating seniors in HISD.

Jefferson Davis offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, ensuring that students be-

come well rounded and are given a wide range of opportunities to prepare them for our ever-changing society. In 2010, Davis received international recognition in Robotics, as well as significant regional awards in dance, ROTC and Culinary Arts.

I congratulate the past and present administration, faculty, staff, and students of Jefferson Davis High School for all of their hard work and dedication to excellence.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. STEVE KING**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 25, 2011*

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 801, I was not present to vote because I was participating in a public meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding the historic flooding that we have experienced along the Missouri River this year.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

## RECOGNIZING DR. RUTH SIMMONS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 25, 2011*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Ruth Simmons for her 11 years of extraordinary service as president of Brown University.

I am proud to say Dr. Simmons is a native of Texas. In 1995 she became president of Smith College, the largest women's college in the United States, where she launched a number of strategic initiatives to strengthen the college's academic programs and inaugurated the first engineering program at a U.S. women's college. Ruth J. Simmons was sworn in as the 18th president of Brown University on July 3, 2001. She has received numerous accolades throughout her career. In 2001, Time magazine named her America's best college president. In 2007, she was named one of U.S. News & World Report's top U.S. leaders and—for the second time.

As one of the Nation's premier scholars, Ruth Simmons has inspired and enlightened so many as an advocate for educational excellence. Throughout Ruth Simmons' tenure as the president of Brown University, she has shown an unwavering commitment to inspiring, educating, and ensuring that the future of young Americans is a bright one. It is educators such as Ruth Simmons that make an immense impact on our children; both teaching them the information to prosper and inspiring them to achieve. Brown University and our country have benefitted immensely from your service, and I hope you will continue to aspire to educate children who are in great need of strong leaders.

I wish to commend Dr. Ruth Simmons and thank her for her service to this great nation. As an academic leader, she has created positive pathways for the future of our students.